

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONPANDANUS DECUS-MONTIUM, A NEW SPECIES  
FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

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Among the extensive collections of plants made in recent years by the Forest Department of the British Solomon Islands is a set of specimens representing the following new species of *Pandanus*. Although as yet known only from staminate flowering collections, the form of the leaves makes it very likely that which includes *Pandanus nemoralis* Merr. & Perry *P. paludosus* the species is a member of the Section *Curvifolia* B. C. Stone, Merr. & Perry, and *P. buinensis* Merr. & Perry, all of which are endemic to the Solomon Islands. They conform in having the fruits (simple or 1-seeded drupes) aggregated in cephalia, and with horizontal rounded-reniform central stigmas, and vegetatively in having rather broadly elliptic leaves, strongly narrowed toward the base, which in life are downwardly curved (hence the sectional name). The present newly proposed species has, as may be seen from the accompanying illustrations, leaves of this type, with a markedly narrowed and folded leaf-base.

Although the species is here typified by a BSIP (British Solomon Islands Plants) collection, I cite also specimens collected by myself and L. J. Brass some years ago which were devoid of flowers or fruit. Its striking appearance, at once noticeable in the field, convinced me that it was new to science, but until now no suitable (flowering) collections have been seen. It is gratifying now to be able to describe this plant, which has been named "decus-montium" (ornament of the mountains) to emphasize its attractive appearance.



Explanation of Figure 1

Fig. 1. *Pandanus decus-montium* new species.— *Upper left*: Habit (Stone 2358, Malaita). *Upper right*: Habit (Stone 2358). Note markedly flattened leaf-bases. *Upper center*: Staminal phalange, enlargement (BSIP 1836). *Lower left*: large juvenile leaf, and small leaf from sucker-shoot, of BSIP 1836 (LAE). *Lower right*: Staminate flowering branch, with small leaves BSIP 1836 (LAE).

**Pandanus decus-montium** new species (Sect. *Curvifolia*)

Fig. 1.

Arbor ad 10 m alta, stipite laeve cicatricata sparse ramosa, ramis erectis, e basi pauci-radicante radiceis gralliformibus ad 2 m altis. *Folia* anguste oblanceolata usque ad 90 cm longa et 8 cm lata (in planta juvenili) vel minora, 30 cm longa et 2.5 cm lata (in planta senili), apicem versus acuta basem versus angustata et valde uniplicata pallidiora, marginibus apicem versus crebre spinuloso-serratis, costis dorsaliter apicem versus similiter spinuloso-serratis, basem versus inermibus vel subsparse aculeatis, aculeis antrorsis 1 mm longis, plicis apicalibus ventraliter spinulosis. Lamina foliorum supra viridis infra glauca basem versus pallida applanata. *Inflorescentia* foeminea ignota; mascula terminalis bracteata racemoso-spicata, bracteis ca. 11, inferioribus foliaceis, basi navicularibus chartaceis, superioribus toto navicularibus apice acuto costis marginibusque spinulosis. *Spicae* masculae ovoideae ca. 3 cm longae et 1.5 cm latae albobrunneae. Phalanges staminorum 5–8 mm longae, staminibus ca. 7–13 umbellatim dispositis, filamentis fere 2 mm longis, antheris orbicularibus utrinque emarginatis 0.8–0.9 mm longis non apiculatis albidis.

*Holotypus*: BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS: GUADALCANAL. Mount Austen, alt. 1000 ft. "by stream on coral limestone; slender tree 30 ft tall with conical crown; bole smooth, olive, with raised sinuous leaf-scars; branches in twos or threes, upward-pointing, slender. Plants clumped. Young stems unbranched and bearing much larger leaves in a very open spiral; as stems branch their leaves get smaller. A few stilt roots to 6 ft. Male tree, flowers fawn-color, subtended by brown papery bracts." 9 May 1963, T. C. Whitmore B&IP. 1836 (BSIP); isotypes LAE! SING! K.

*Additional specimens*: BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS: MALAITA. Kwara-ae District, Kwalo, ridge about 1 mi. northeast of Tantalau Village, ca. 1200 ft. alt. "Erect slender tree with terminal crown of large leaves and a few lateral simple branches bearing small leaves; trunk somewhat triquete-cylindric, ringed by subdistant leaf-scars and bearing scattered, short, blunt prickles; base of trunk with several short, down-curved prop-roots which are also prickly. Leaves in 3 distinct spirals, leaf-bases conspicuous by being flattened (folded); above the vase 6–8 inches each leaf margin is then flattened horizontally; the M-shape of most pandan leaves is scarcely noticeable. No flowers or fruit seen." 23 September 1957, B. C. Stone 2358 (BISH!).

SAN CRISTOBAL. Hinuahaoro, 900 m. alt., "tree to 10 m. high, stems solitary, or several erect from a curved or horizontal common stock, raised several feet from the ground on stout prickly proproots. Stem with numerous lateral small upturned branches. Leaves not over 1 m. long, glaucous beneath, of soft texture, numerous in 3 spirals. Sterile." 22 September 1932, L. J. Brass 2918 (A!).

Vernacular names: "apapola" (BSIP 1836); "ahole" (Stone 2358).

I would like to acknowledge the helpful advice of Dr. T. C. Whitmore and of G. F. C. Dennis in connection with the preparation of this paper.